

long run have not been wise for America.

OK. It is not going to happen this time because the votes are here. Senator REID, the majority leader, has the votes. This budget is going to pass. I suppose it is possible that the American people will have their voices heard and something could change and it could come out better. That would be my hope. But unless something changes in the dynamic, and the only thing that can change this dynamic is if the American people make their voices heard through their representatives and tell them that is not what we intended when we voted for President Obama. Or almost half the people voted for JOHN MCCAIN; that is not what we intended you guys to do. You did not tell us you were going to triple the debt. You did not tell us you were going to do these things.

What about our Member who ran for reelection recently in the last several years? They have been attacking President Bush. They have been attacking President Bush as a profligate spender and saying they were going to do better. This is better? Give me a break.

Let's talk about that. I think a relevant year is 2003, after 9/11, after that recession, the commencement of the war on terrorism, President Bush had a deficit of around \$400 billion. He was savagely criticized for that, and some of that was justified. At the time that was the biggest deficit since World War II.

It dropped for 3 consecutive years. In 2007, the year before last, the budget had dropped to \$161 billion. We were on a good path, and then this recession hit. The President sent out \$150 billion last year, unwisely. That did very little good. All of a sudden the deficit last year, September 30, was \$459 billion.

Well, that was the biggest since World War II. And I think he was rightly criticized for that. I did not vote to send out the checks. Sorry, constituents. I did not think it was going to work. I do not think it has. Most economists say it did not benefit us.

But this year, hold your hats, with the \$800 billion stimulus bill we passed this year, the deficit for this 1 year will not be \$455 billion, \$600 billion, \$700 billion, \$800 billion, \$1,000 billion. No, it is \$1.8 trillion. It is \$1.8 trillion this fiscal year, and they are scoring the Wall Street bailout all this year. They are scoring Freddie Mac and Fannie Mae this year. There are some one-time things in that score.

But next year it is going to be \$1.1 trillion, according to the Congressional Budget Office. If you look at Congressional Budget Office numbers—here are the President's numbers. He projects, with a robust growing economy, the debt will be \$1.75 trillion in 2009; \$1.1, almost \$1.2 trillion in 2010; almost \$900 billion in 2011; and he goes down. And it starts coming back up in the out-years when he has solid growth and no projections of an economic slowdown. He projects continued growing deficits

to \$712 billion. And that is that 1 year. OK. There is not a single year, not a single year in these 10 years of the President's budget that the deficit is as low as the highest deficit President Bush ever had. Not one.

But my staff tells me, let's not forget, that is the President's score. It has been doctored too. It is really worse than that based on the money they plan to spend. Our own Congressional Budget Office, controlled by the majority Members of our body, this is what they have for the deficit. They have this year being \$1.845 trillion, \$1.845 billion; 1.4 the next year; not at \$712 billion but at \$1.2 trillion in the tenth year.

So that is why Senator CONRAD, our Democratic chairman, has said it is unsustainable. You cannot sustain these kind of deficits, even with a healthy economy.

USA Today, when this crisis began to hit us, they wrote an article that said simply this: An economy founded on excessive personal debt, excessive Government debt, and excessive trade deficits is not healthy.

So what we have to do is get off debt and get back to an honest growth economy that we have always been able to have. We have had a clear housing bubble that has burst. It has impacted the financial community significantly.

We have done a lot of things. Some of them are of dubious value. But we have done a lot of things to work our way through, and certainly President Obama projects the economy to bounce back strongly. But we cannot keep spending. We have to control that.

So as we go forward next week, I hope the American people will be alert to the most important issues; that they will make their voices heard; that all of our colleagues will go home, and as they sit down in quiet time, ask themselves: Can I vote for this? Can I go on record as voting for a plan that will increase the annual interest payment of Americans from \$170 billion to \$800 billion? And I am going to triple the debt in our country in 10 years, put us on a plan that will do that? I think not. I hope not.

I encourage my colleagues to study it carefully and vote no and let us see if we cannot come back with a much better budget. The only way to fix some of these issues is a bipartisan effort because some of those spending programs are tough. They have been growing out of control. It is going to take mature, tough decisionmaking to bring it under control.

Some special interests are going to holler as soon as you try to do it, and you have to listen to them. But you cannot let them set the national policy.

You can't let the person who is getting a benefit from a single program set a policy that adversely impacts everybody else in the country. That is what we are paid to do, to make the tough choices. We are not doing it now. The President's budget is not respon-

sible. I hope we can confront it honestly and make some positive changes.

I yield the floor and suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate now proceed to a period of morning business, with Senators allowed to speak therein for up to 10 minutes each.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

NEVADA GAMING COMMISSION 50TH ANNIVERSARY

Mr. REID. Mr. President, this month marks the 50th anniversary of one of the most important institutions in the growth and prosperity of the State of Nevada—the Nevada Gaming Commission.

On March 30, 2009, the William S. Boyd School of Law at the University of Nevada, Las Vegas, will mark this anniversary and honor those who have contributed to the stability, integrity, and success of the world's first gaming control system.

The Nevada State Legislature approved the Nevada Control Act in response to Gov. Grant Sawyer's request for gaming reform in his first state of the State address. Governor Grant and others recognized that clearer rules and oversight were necessary to show America that Nevada was serious about fair and ethical gaming.

When Governor Sawyer appointed the first members of the Gaming Commission in 1959, he said that the key characteristic of his appointees must be integrity. Governors since that time have followed that guideline and ensured 50 years of an ethical Commission.

This 50th anniversary leads me to reflect upon my 4 years as chairman of the commission, from 1977 to 1981. During these 4 years, we transitioned to a new world of gaming where Nevada shared the legal gaming stage with New Jersey. I will always remember the support I received as Commission Chairman from Governors Mike O'Callaghan, Robert List and my fellow commissioners. Over the course of my years in public service, nothing has given me more satisfaction than the progress we made during those years.

The current members of the Gaming Commission—Chairman Peter Bernhard, Arthur Marshall, Sue Wagner, Radha Chanderraj and Tony Alamo—personify the qualities of leadership Nevada expects and deserves.

To all the members of the Nevada Gaming Commission, past and